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AFGHAN IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN IRAN (C)

Recent [redacted] visitors report that Iran's treatment of its Afghan immigrant and refugee population is still mixed. On the one hand, Iran allows the Peshawar fundamentalist parties to have offices in a number of cities, including Tehran and Qom, and does not harry Afghan immigrants who came to work during the mid-1970s economic boom. On the other hand, it still places travel restrictions on the Afghan refugees who arrived after the April 1978 Communist coup and forbids them to hold jobs (though many do). Moreover, [redacted]

[redacted] 40,000 Afghan Sunnis have been herded into three camps where they are behind barbed wire and under military guard. (C)

Comment: Iran's restrictions on the Afghan refugees probably arise from fear of economic competition, drug smuggling, and general lawlessness, and the belief that Afghans who become integrated into Iranian life will be less inclined to return to Afghanistan to fight. Iran may have singled out the Sunnis for particularly close surveillance because it has greater control over Shia Afghans, who receive most of their aid from Iran. [redacted]

[redacted]

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